



Frederick Henry Of Orange-nassau And Amalia Van Solms, 17th-century Dutch School

12 000 EUR



Period : 17th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Oil painting on wood

Width : 68,5

Height : 84

Description

Pair of portraits from the 17th-century Dutch school, followers of Gerrit van Honthorst. Oil on oak panel. The governor (stadtholder in Dutch) of the United Provinces and his wife are both portrayed in faux ovals, a common practice in the mid-17th century, thus simulating the appearance of the subjects in a window frame. The resemblance of these two portraits to the famous double portrait of Frederick Henry of Orange-Nassau (1584-1647) and Amalia van Solms (1602-1675), painted by Gerrit van Honthorst in 1637-1638 and now in the Mauritshuis (see photos), is evident. They share the same clothing, the same bust-length composition, the same side lighting, and the same desire to present a couple in a balance of dignity and restraint. Our two panels, however, are later

Dealer

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works, belonging to the generation of painters who, after 1640, adopted and disseminated Honthorst's style in the Dutch Republic and the Southern Netherlands. The precise and measured execution suggests the work of a Dutch or Flemish workshop of that era, connected to the circles of Utrecht or The Hague, where Honthorst's influence was strong. Our two portraits are a tribute to the princely couple, a commemoration of the Stadtholder who skillfully governed the Dutch Republic, strengthening its power, and of his wife, who helped make the court of The Hague a major artistic center. Finally, what is striking is the way in which the painting combines the Protestant rigor of the North with the discreet sensuality of the materials. Nothing is ostentatious; everything lies in the nuance, in the silent intensity of the gazes, in the way the light glides over the lace or catches a pearl. The simulated ovals, far from being a mere artifice, become the very space where the magic of portraiture unfolds: a space where the subjects, simultaneously present and distant, seem to step through the surface of the panel to stand before us. Our two noble portraits are simply set in streamlined frames of blackened wood.

Dimensions: Amalia van Solms: 75 x 59.5 cm - 83 x 68 cm with frame; Frederick Henry of Nassau: 75.5 x 60 cm - 84 x 68.5 cm with frame.

Biography: The son and grandson of painters, Gerard van Honthorst (Utrecht 1592 - Id. 1656) was a pupil of Abraham Bloemaert in Utrecht. He was only 18 years old when he moved to Rome, where he was captivated by the art of Caravaggio. He thus fully embraced the new aesthetic established by the brilliant Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, and his talent was soon recognized. Powerful patrons--Cardinal Scipione Borghese, Grand Duke Cosimo II de' Medici of Tuscany, but especially Marquis Gustiniani, with whom he lodged--secured him important commissions to decorate the churches of Rome. His works, characterized by their strong contrasts in lighting, earned him the nickname "Gherardo

delle Notti" (Gerard of the Nights). Returning to Utrecht in 1620, he opened a thriving workshop with numerous assistants. In 1628, he was invited by Charles I to the English court, where he painted several portraits. In 1635, he created large-scale historical compositions for Christian IV, King of Denmark. And in 1637, he became the favorite painter at the court of Prince Frederick Henry of Orange-Nassau. He then executed mythological paintings, decorated the famous Huis ten Bosch in The Hague, and painted numerous portraits, including those of members of the House of Orange-Nassau.

Bibliophile references: - Gerrit van Honthorst 1592-1656, exhibition catalogue, Centraal Museum Utrecht / National Gallery of Art Washington, Zwolle: Waanders Publishers, 1999. - PAPI, Gianni, Gherardo delle Notti, Gherrit Honthorst in Italia, Edizione dei Soncino, 1999. - Dutch Portraiture in the Age of Rembrandt and Frans Hals, Mauritshuis, The Hague: Waanders Publishers, various editions. - S. Slive, Dutch Painting 1600-1800, New Haven / London: Yale University Press, 1995. - E. de Jongh, Portretten van echt en trouw. Huwelijk en gezin in de Nederlandse kunst van de zeventiende eeuw, Amsterdam: Rijksmuseum / Zwolle: Waanders Publishers, 1986. - R. Falkenburg, The Portrait in the Netherlands, London: Phaidon Press, 2003.